

Title: **THE RULER OF THE STORM**

Text: Mark 4:35-41

Subject: *Christ's Calming the Storm*

Date: Tuesday Evening — February 27, 2018

Readings: *David Burge and Merle Hart*

Introduction:

“If God is love, why is there so much evil in this world?” — “If Christianity is such a great life, why do Christians have so much trouble in their lives?” — “Why do the righteous suffer, while the wicked prosper?” Such questions are not easily answered. Indeed, they cannot be answered, except by the Word of God. And they cannot be answered to the satisfaction of any, except those who are taught of God. Let's open our Bibles to the 4th chapter of Mark's Gospel. Here, we will find answers to questions that often arise when trouble and heartache disrupt our lives. You will find my text in verses 35-41 — Mark 4:35-41.

(Mark 4:35-41) “And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. (36) And when they had

THE RULER OF THE STORM

sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. (37) And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. (38) And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? (39) And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. (40) And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? (41) And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

At the end of a long and busy day our Lord and his disciples boarded a small ship to cross over the Galilean Sea. The Lord Jesus had preached all day in the open air to great multitudes. And when they were alone, he privately taught his disciples the meaning of his words.

THE RULER OF THE STORM

THE GADARENE

But there was one more work to be done before his day's work could be complete. On the other side of the sea there was a poor lunatic, a maniac, who had lived in the clutches of Satan for many years. That poor Gadarene maniac was one of those sinners the Son of God had come to save.

- The Lord Jesus stood forth as his Surety in the everlasting covenant of grace, determined to save him, before the world began.
- For more than thirty years, Christ had lived for that poor Gadarene, to establish righteousness for him, by his representative obedience to God.
- Soon, the Son of God would die to redeem this poor soul.
- And now the time of love had come, when this wretched man must obtain mercy and grace.

As “he must needs go through Samaria” to save the Samaritan woman at the appointed “time of love,” so now he must needs go over the sea to save the maniac of Gadara. So our Savior said to

THE RULER OF THE STORM

his disciples, “*Let us pass over unto the other side.*” His labor for the day could not end until he had spoken peace, pardon, and eternal life to this chosen object of his mercy, love, and grace.

Oh, may this be the day of grace for some of you!

As I preach the gospel, may the Son of God call some of you to life and faith in him by the power of his Spirit. Perhaps you have come here today possessed by the devil himself, as this Gadarene was. If God is pleased to do so, he can bind the fiend of hell by the word of his power and take possession of your heart by his almighty grace. If he does, before you leave this building, you will find yourself “*sitting*” at the Master’s feet, “*clothed*” with the garments of salvation, and in your “*right mind,*” trusting Christ alone as your Lord and Savior. Savior, do for some sinner here what you did for that Gadarene two thousand years ago. Be gracious. Save some. Do it for the honor of your own great name.

A GREAT STORM

THE RULER OF THE STORM

But before our Lord and his disciples reached this wild Gadarene, they had to cross the Sea of Galilee. As they were crossing the sea, *“There arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full”* (v. 37). The disciples were full of fear. Death seemed certain and imminent. But the Lord Jesus was asleep in the back of the ship. These frightened disciples woke him up and cried in despair, *“Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm”* (vv. 38-39). Then he gently reproved his fearful, unbelieving disciples. And the story ends.

THREE TIMES

This brief event in the earthly life of our Savior is recorded by God the Holy Ghost three times in Holy Scripture. Matthew, Mark, and Luke were all inspired of God to give us a record of this event. Obviously, the Lord our God intends for us to remember it and learn by it. The story is written for

THE RULER OF THE STORM

our learning and admonition, that we might be prepared for the storms of life.

Proposition: It is easy enough for us to see the storm, the wind, the waves, the tossing of the ship, and the threat of death; but we ought to focus our attention on the Lord Jesus himself — **THE RULER OF THE STORM**.

That is the title of my message — **THE RULER OF THE STORM**. I want you to hold your Bible open on your lap and follow me as we look at this instructive event in the life of our Savior while he walked on earth with his disciples. **What he was then, he is now. What he did then, he does now. He is the same today as he was yesterday; and he will be the same tomorrow.** Blessed be his name, he does not change!

Divisions: What does God the Holy Spirit mean for us to learn from this story that he has recorded for us in his Word? Let me show you five things:

THE RULER OF THE STORM

1. Following Christ will not shield us from the storms of life.
2. God our Savior is a real man.
3. There is much evil and sin in the strongest believers.
4. The Lord Jesus Christ has the power to calm your storm.
5. Our great Savior is a very tender Master.

LIFE'S STORMS

1st — Certainly, the Spirit of God has recorded this event to show us that **following Christ will not shield us from the storms of life**. Here are our Lord's chosen disciples, the first believers of this Gospel Age, men who had forsaken family, friends, and livelihood to follow Christ. They were saved men. They were true believers. But suddenly, without warning, they are in the midst of a howling storm. The fear of death seized their hearts. And it looked like death could not be averted by any means.

THE RULER OF THE STORM

What these faithful men experienced that evening all faithful men and women experience in this world. — “*In the world,*” so long as we are in this

world, “*you shall have tribulation.*” Though you are a believer, though you follow Christ, you will have your appointed share of sickness and pain, sorrow and weeping, vexations and disappointments, partings and separations, bereavement and death.

Our Lord never promised any of his children in this world material prosperity, bodily health, financial success, domestic peace, earthly ease, or longevity of life.

He does promise us his presence (Isaiah 43:1-4; 41:10; Hebrews 13:5). — “*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee!*”

(Isaiah 41:10) “Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

THE RULER OF THE STORM

(Isaiah 43:1-3) “But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. (2) When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.”

He does promise us his grace. — “*My grace is sufficient for thee!*” (2 Corinthians 12:9) But he does not promise ease. Faith in and obedience to Christ do not shield us from trouble in this world. The Scriptures tell us plainly that these disciples were being obedient to the Lord Jesus when they came into this storm.

- He told them to get into the ship; and they did.
- He sent them directly into the storm.

THE RULER OF THE STORM

Whatever the storm is that you have to endure, though it seems to threaten your very soul, if you believe the gospel, if you trust Christ, you may be assured of these THREE THINGS regarding it.

1. **It comes to you by the hand of God, your heavenly Father** (1 Samuel 3:18; Job 1:20-21; 2:10).

(1 Samuel 3:18) “And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.”

(Job 1:20-21) “Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, (21) And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

THE RULER OF THE STORM

(Job 2:10) “But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”

2. **It is designed of God to do you good** (Hebrews 12:11).

“Bastards may escape the rod,
Sunk in earthly, vain delight,
But the true born child of God,
May not, must not, if he might.
Trials make the promise sweet;
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to His feet,
Lay me low and keep me there.”

3. **The Lord will sustain you and see you through your trial to a good end.** — “*He led them forth by the right way*” (Psalm 107:7).

THE RULER OF THE STORM

Child of God, leave it to the Lord your God to determine what is best for you. Be assured that he is too wise to err, too good to do wrong, and too strong to fail. — “*All things are of God.*” And he does all things well.

The gospel of God does not promise sinners health, happiness, and prosperity, but salvation and eternal life in Christ (John 3:14-18, 36). As God’s ambassador, it is my joy and privilege to proclaim salvation and eternal life to sinners. **If you do but trust the Lord Jesus Christ, I promise you, upon authority of God’s Holy Word, that you shall never be condemned, that you have eternal life in Christ.** But if I promised you that faith in Christ would bring you a longer life, increased wealth, or a happy home, I would be lying to you. If you trust Christ, you have in him...

- Full redemption and complete forgiveness (Ephesians 1:6-7).
- Perfect righteousness (Romans 5:19).
- Everlasting acceptance with God (Ephesians 1:6).

THE RULER OF THE STORM

Blessed be God, faith in Christ shields us from the wrath of God! But following Christ does not shield us from the storms of life. If God gives you faith, he will give you sorrow in this world (Philippians 1:29). Faith must be tried. By trial it is proved and strengthened.

A REAL MAN

2nd — This event on the Sea of Galilee also shows us that **God our Savior is a real man.** When the waves began to break upon the ship, we read that the Lord Jesus was “*in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow*” (v. 38). He had labored all day for the good of men’s souls. He had preached repeatedly. And he was physically exhausted. This is written to show us his manhood.

What condescension! The Son of God became one of us. He is a real man, as fully God as though he were not man, yet as fully man as though he were not God! (Philippians 2:5-8; 2 Corinthians 8:9).

THE RULER OF THE STORM

(2 Corinthians 8:9) “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

(Philippians 2:5-8) “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

I find great comfort, satisfaction, and delight in the eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is God the eternal Son! Were he not God, he could not be our Savior. He who undertakes to be the Mediator between God and men must be God. **But I find equal comfort, satisfaction, and delight in his manhood.** Were he not the perfect man, he could not

THE RULER OF THE STORM

be our Savior. Someone once said, “God could not suffer and man could not satisfy; but the God-man both suffered and satisfied.” We rejoice to know that the Lord Jesus is both. He is God and man in one glorious Person. Therefore, he is “*able to save un the uttermost them that come unto God by him;*” and he is able to understand, feel, and sympathize with the experiences of his people in this world (Hebrews 2:17-18).

(Hebrews 2:17-18) “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. (18) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”

Try to get hold of this. — Because the Lord Jesus Christ is a real man, like us, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, he is a sympathizing High Priest, one who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. **Child of God, your Savior knows what**

THE RULER OF THE STORM

you are going through. He has been there! And he is touched by that which touches you (Hebrews 4:15-16). He knows the heart of a man, the bodily pains of a man, the difficulties of a man, even the fears of a man (Hebrews 5:7), for he is a man, a man altogether like we are except for sin!

(Hebrews 5:7) “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.”

(Hebrews 4:15-16) “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. (16) Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

- Are you in need? So was Christ in this world!

THE RULER OF THE STORM

- Are you alone? So was Christ when he lived here!
- Are you misunderstood, misrepresented, slandered, and persecuted? So was the Son of man when he was here!
- Does Satan tempt you and offer horrid suggestions to your mind? He also tempted the Lord Jesus when he was in the wilderness!
- Do you ever sense that you are forsaken by God? Your Savior was forsaken by God for you!

I want so much for us to see this. — **God our Savior is a real man.** He lived as a real man. He was tempted as a real man. He suffered as a real man. He bore sin in his body on the tree, as a real man! He died as a real man. He arose as a real man. He reigns in heaven as a real man. He is coming again as a real man. And this man is our God!

OUR SIN

3rd — The Holy Spirit has recorded this event to show us plainly that **there is much evil and sin in**

THE RULER OF THE STORM

the strongest believers. We have a striking proof of this fact in the conduct of these disciples. When the storm began to toss their little boat, in fear and unbelief, they awoke the Lord Jesus and spoke sharply to him, saying, “*Master, carest thou not that we perish?*” (v. 38). They should have known better. They should have believed more. They should have trusted him more. But **fear has no logic.** You cannot reason with fear. These poor men heard the wind, saw the waves, felt the waters beating upon them, and they quickly forgot all that they had seen and heard. — How like them we are!

I offer no excuse for any man’s sin, yours, mine, or theirs. But I do want to help God’s saints if I can, even when they stumble and fall through unbelief. Even the greatest examples of faith in the Bible had horrible fits of unbelief.

- Abraham, the father of the faithful, the friend of God, acted with fear and unbelief before Abimelech.
- Elijah, the man who stood alone for God before the prophets of Baal, fled in fear from Jezebel.

THE RULER OF THE STORM

- David, the man after God's own heart, the giant slayer, was overtaken for a time by fear and unbelief. He said, "*I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*" (1 Samuel 27:1).
- Peter, who cut off the high priest's servant's ear in the Garden, trembled before a young maid in Pilate's court.

Sometimes the Lord leaves his children for a season, like he did Hezekiah, so that we might know all that is in our hearts (2 Chronicles 32:31).

(2 Chronicles 32:31) "Howbeit in *the business of* the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was *done* in the land, **God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.**"

Why does God so plainly and constantly show us in his Word the sin and unbelief of the most shining examples of grace and faith the world has ever known? Why is it necessary for me to talk so

THE RULER OF THE STORM

plainly about my sin and yours? Let me show you **FOUR REASONS.**

1. **We need to be constantly reminded that salvation is by the grace of God alone** (Ephesians 2:8-9). Christ is our only righteousness! Our acceptance with God is only upon the merits of his dear Son (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).
2. **We must be constantly reminded that in our flesh there is no good thing** (Romans 7:18).

In my flesh there is nothing good, no potential for good, and no possibility of good. My flesh, like yours, is sin, produces nothing but sin, seeks nothing but sin, and loves nothing but sin. Someone said, “Sin is my nature. Sin is my name. Sin is my middle name. And sin is my sir name.” And he was right!

3. **We need to learn to be patient and forbearing with one another** (Galatians 6:1-2).

THE RULER OF THE STORM

(Galatians 6:1-2) “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (2) Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

Do not conclude that a person has no grace because he has much sin. There are spots upon the face of the sun. But we do not despise the sun for its spots. We overlook the spots and enjoy the light! There is much dross surrounding every nugget of gold. But who refuses the gold because of the dross? There are flaws in the finest diamonds. But I never saw a man throw a diamond away because it had a flaw. Should we not cherish God’s people as much?

God, make me quick to see grace and slow to see sin in my brethren. When we see sin in one another, we ought to overlook the fault of the flesh and rejoice in the grace of the Spirit. Why is that so hard for us to do? Let us forever be rid of that self-righteousness

THE RULER OF THE STORM

and pride that cuts off and excommunicates brethren when they are overtaken in a fault.

4. **And when we sin, we need to know that we have an Advocate with the Father** (1 John 2:1-2).

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.*”

There is much evil in the best of men, much sin in the most faithful saints, and much unbelief in the strongest believers. But we have a faithful, almighty, righteous Advocate in heaven, whom God always hears. And he pleads with God for the non-imputation of sin to us.

CHRIST'S POWER

THE RULER OF THE STORM

4th — Surely, the Spirit of God has recorded this event upon the Sea of Galilee to assure every believer that **the Lord Jesus Christ has power to calm your**

storm. The winds blew. The waves arose. The ship tossed to and fro. The disciples were horrified. But then, the Lord Jesus Christ “*arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was great calm*” (v. 39). Here is the Lord God, displaying his total sovereignty!

Here is a Savior you can trust. — “*He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still*” (Psalm 107:29). Doubt anything else, if you must, but, O my soul, never doubt the power of Christ! He has all power. And he who has all power is able to do all things. — “*What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?*”

- Jesus Christ can speak peace to sinners overwhelmed by the storm of God’s wrath.
- Christ Jesus can speak peace and calm the storm that terrifies your soul this hour.
- The Son of God can speak peace and calm the storm that is raging in your heart, even when he leaves you in the stormy sea.

THE RULER OF THE STORM

Even if he does not, at the present time, take away the storm, he can and will give you peace in the midst of the storm. This is what I am saying, “*Cast your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you*” (1 Peter 5:6-7). The Lord Jesus Christ can calm your storm. Trust him.

TENDER MASTER

5th — And this story has been recorded upon the pages of Holy Scripture to show us that **our great Savior is a very tender Master.** What tenderness we see in our Lord’s response to his sinful, unbelieving disciples. There is not a word of anger, not a threat of punishment, nor a hint of disgust. He simply asked them two questions, not to hurt them, but to help them. — “*Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?*” **It is as if he had said,** “There’s no reason for your fear. There is no reason for your unbelief. Have I not proved that to you?”

THE RULER OF THE STORM

- Let all the world know that **the Son of God is full of mercy, love, and grace.** — His sinful disciples prove it!
- Let all the world know that **Jesus Christ will never cast off his people because of their sins.** — His grace is immutable! — He does not charge his own with sin! — He will not deal with us upon the basis of our sins!

Let all who profess faith in his name follow the example of Christ (Ephesians 4:32-51).

(Ephesians 4:31-5:2) “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (32) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you. (1) Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; (2) And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.”

THE RULER OF THE STORM

- Be gentle with young believers.
- Be gentle with weak believers.
- Be gentle with fallen believers.
- Be gentle with inconsistent believers.
- Be gentle with old believers.

APPLICATION

Carry this story home with you. Meditate upon it. And ask God the Holy Spirit to graciously seal these five lessons to your heart.

1. Following Christ will not shield us from the storms of life.
2. God our Savior is a real man.
3. There is much evil and sin in the strongest believers.
4. The Lord Jesus Christ has the power to calm your storm.
5. Our great Savior is a very tender Master.

He who loved us, redeemed us, and saves us is — **THE RULER OF THE STORM**. Trust him in the storm. May God give us grace to trust him in all

THE RULER OF THE STORM

things. — May God give us grace to follow our Lord's example.

Amen!